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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000900

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KU](#) [KDMR](#)

SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION, MARCH 12: IRAQ; BLIX REPORTS; TURKEY'S REFUSAL OF US TROOPS; SHARED VALUES CAMPAIGN

**¶1.** Summary: Kuwaiti commentators show predictable sympathy to the US position with the UNSC and the Turkish Parliament's refusal to accept US troops for an attack on Iraq. Blix's "indecisive" reports are blamed for contributing to the disunity on the Security Council. Opposition to war in Iraq continues in Islamist circles with the radical Islamist "Salafist" group calling for opposition to this "new Crusade."

A writer attacks the Department's Shared Values campaign, declaring that the State Department has abandoned it due to excessive criticism and the realization that US policies are to blame for its poor image in the Arab world.

On the news pages, three more Kuwaitis were arrested on suspicion of providing intelligence to Iraq. The trial of Sami al-Mutairi, charged with the January 21 murder of American civilian defense contractor Michael Pouliot and the injuring of his colleague, began on March 12. End Summary.

**¶2.** News Stories: The Kuwaiti Salafi Movement (conservative Islamist) issued a press release denouncing American plans for war against Iraq, and calling on the Arab and Islamic worlds to confront this "new Crusade."

The Kuwaiti Criminal Court began hearing of the case of Sami Al-Mutairi, charged with killing American citizen Michael Pouliot and injuring his colleague in a shooting attack on January 21, 2003.

Three Kuwaitis were arrested on suspicion of providing intelligence to the Iraqi regime.

Three Americans were detained for photographing military installations and sensitive areas of Kuwait International Airport.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, refuted Iraqi claims that the holes which were made in the border fence earlier this week were an aggression to which Kuwait will be legally held responsible: "Passages in the border fence were made on our land, and this is our right."

Daily Al-Qabas reports that Washington is expected to order the departure of its non-essential diplomats and their families from Kuwait, Israel and Syria this week.

Kuwait Airways has reduced the number of flights to some destinations during the month of March.

Kuwait Petroleum Company states it will close two refineries if war breaks out.

The Ministry of Health has begun vaccinating emergency medical workers against smallpox.

The Humanitarian Operations Center, a liaison center for relief NGOs and the US military, was opened in Kuwait City on March 11.

Peninsula Shield troops may be assigned to undertake humanitarian operations and to protect Iraqi refugees as necessary.

Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabah hailed Jordan's support of Kuwaiti issues in the recent Arab and Islamic summits, and King Abdullah's refusal to meet Ali Hassan Al-Majid, the military governor of Kuwait during the 1990-91 occupation, on a recent Arab trip.

Editorials:

**¶3.** "The Turkish Dilemma" Dr. Yacoub Al-Sharab wrote in independent Al-Rai Al-Aam

(3/11): "Turkey has disappointed the US by not allowing it to deploy its forces in preparation for the expected war on Iraq despite Turkey's military and political agreements with the US. [T]his crisis is expected to get worse unless there is a sudden reversal of the Turkish parliament decision, or if Turkey does not offer alternate solution that coincides with the American demands."

**14. "The Blazing Reports"**

Lawyer Jamal Al-Kandari wrote in independent Al-Watan (3/11): "The gray Blix's reports regarding WMD in Iraq have contributed to creating a big gap among the 15 [Security Council members] at the UN. His reports were not decisive, despite the fact that he was convinced that Iraq had violated the resolutions. He imagined that being courteous with Iraq would contribute in Iraq's response to disclose its WMD. Blix's elastic statements in his reports have sowed sedition among the UN members."

**15. "Even in America There are Foolish Propagandists"**

Islamist Adel Al-Qassar wrote in independent Al-Qabas (3/11): "There are ignorant propagandists in the Islamic world who deform the true image of Islam, just as there are foolish propagandists such as Senator Joseph Biden. [that are] radical extremists who distort the US image because they simply do not understand Islam. Both types of propagandists, Islamists and Americans alike, are considered a threat to the security and stability of their societies. The contradictory concepts of US efforts to improve its image, and its [Middle East policies] have led the US State Department to call off the Shared Values campaign in the face of criticism by Muslim Arabs in the US and abroad."

**16. "Your Father's Worries"**

Mohammad Al-Saleh wrote in independent Al-Qabas (3/11): "To President George Bush, I share your father's worries at seeing his son walking alone on an unpaved road in preparing to make a decision against Iraq. [G]iven the circumstances, it would be wise to give international inspectors more time to scrap Iraqi WMD, as put forth in a plan supported by France, Germany, Russia and China. Mr. President, we once again share your father's worry about you and about the world. The question is, does ousting Saddam Hussein and his regime justify the enormous expected losses to be incurred by the US?"

**17. "USA: The Shelter for People from Tyrants and Suppressors"**

Nahar Al-Mikrad wrote in Independent Al-Watan (3/12): "We cannot hide our admiration for the people and the great nation of the USA. America does not hide facts and its record is crystal clean. America confronted the Nazis and their allies and ended their dreams of expansion. We, as Kuwaitis and GCC citizens, appreciate the American stance and we can never forget their sacrifices for liberating us from Iraq. Today, the US and Britain are standing ready for the zero hour in order to remove the tyrant in Iraq."

JONES